

Cinematic Masterpiece by GallifreyGod

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Summary:

After traveling to the Big Apple to become a writer, Joyce finds herself spiraling down. Unable to find her muse, she feels like giving up. But after finding a special someone in her writing class, she realizes her muse has been right in front of her the whole time

Cinematic Masterpiece

Author's Note:

I hope you enjoy this! I'm always a sucker for a good AU story.

Joyce flung her pen across the room with anger, crumpling up the blank piece of paper in front of her. It seemed like the only decent words that came to her mind were in the worst of times; showering, during dinner, mid-conversation with Jim, on the L train. She came to New York to be a writer, not a flunk. She had been stuck with writer's block for six months straight, maybe New York would lift that barrier? She just wanted something, *anything*, to bring back with her to class tomorrow.

Joyce never wanted to admit it but she wanted to impress Jim. He was one of the most prestigious writers in her literature class, she couldn't afford to fail in front of him. Jim Hopper, the man whose story was untold to the rest. She knew she'd never have a chance with him, he was A-list in the young literature world, and she was... *well*, she wasn't even on that rank system.

She stared out of her apartment window, looking down at the busy Chelsea streets. How did all of those people make it in New York? How did they succeed when she couldn't even put pen to paper? Bringing her hot cup of tea to her lips, she tried to muster up anything worthy of writing.

Flinging her purse over her shoulder, Joyce stepped off of the L train and out into the subway station. She traveled this route every night for three weeks, knowing each step she took she was walking closer to her disappointed class director, Martin. Trudging along 8th Avenue, sticking her middle finger up at every cat-caller, Joyce found herself pulling open the doors to the New Yorker Hotel; where her class was every night.

She waved at Calvin, the check-in clerk, as she snuck away to the

conference room. The makeshift auditorium that Martin pulled together was filled with attendees chatting amongst themselves.

"Joyce, Good to see you! Can you step into my office." Martin asked as he pointed the opposite direction.

"It's a staff kitchenette, Martin. It's not your office." Joyce spoke begrudgingly as she followed him.

After gently shutting the door behind her, Martin clasped his hands together. "You seem to be struggling, Joyce. I read your memoir piece and it was lacking... *pizazz*. So! I want you to sit out for today, alright? Have some coffee, take some notes and pointers. Just don't worry too much." Martin said as he patted her shoulder.

"I didn't write anything anyway." Joyce stated with a guilty glance at her feet.

"Joyce, you have so much potential! I see it, all those words locked away inside you. Just find a way to open them up! I hear the Metropolitan has a new feature opening, maybe you should visit and see if you can find your muse." Martin suggested with a sad smile. He had faith in Joyce, more than he really should for a failing writer, but he also knew that she had a fire in her soul. She just had to find it.

"Hey, Joyce." Jim greeted her as he grabbed a cup of coffee from the refreshment table. Joyce felt her heart speed up tenfold. Throwing on her best smile, Joyce turned around and smiled at him. "Hi, Jim."

"Why didn't you speak today? I was looking forward to hearing you." He said with a small frown that made her head spin.

"I uh, I haven't felt well. Had a bit of a sore throat today." She lied as she awkwardly motioned to her throat. She couldn't just come out and say *'hey, yeah, I totally bombed the assignment.'*

"That sucks, I hope you feel better. Are you gonna speak tomorrow instead?" He questioned as he took a sip of his coffee.

"I'll try, what's the assignment? I was taking notes when he said it."

Well, she wasn't lying this time, she just wanted him to talk a little bit longer.

"140 words, at least two metaphors, and a simile. It can be about anything as long as it hits those requirements." Jim stated confidently off the top of his head.

"Oh, then I can probably think of something." There was another lie. Joyce felt stupid under his gaze. He probably thought of her as a failure, wondering why she was even here.

"I can't wait to hear it." Jim said before his departure.

"Fuck."

It was a long night for Joyce, sitting around trying to figure out what to write. Nothing came to her mind, absolutely not a single word. Just eraser shavings and six empty cups of coffee. It wasn't until three in the morning that Joyce decided she would just quit the class. She wasn't going anywhere in this business, that much was clear to her. So, she jumped on the L train the next night and walked in with the expectation to leave.

As she walked up to Martin, she quickly ran over the reasons in her head why she wasn't going to continue the class.

"Joyce! You're up first!" Martin said, cutting her off from speaking first.

"Oh no, I don't..." She tried to speak but he was already leading her up to the center. With a small push, he sent her off to speak.

Joyce stumbled up to the small podium, scribbled paper clutched in her hand. This was going to end in embarrassment, she already knew it. Clearing her throat, she looked around the room at the faces staring up at her. Then she saw him. Jim was sitting front row, his eyes twinkling and his mouth cocked into a smile. Giving her a small nod of luck, he waited for her to speak.

Her hands were clammy and shaking but she knew in that moment

just what she wanted to say. She crumpled up the paper and threw it behind herself with a smile. The audience looked at her with a confused face, but she felt the right words in her heart. Suddenly, it was like Jim was the only person in the entire room.

"He was sin, an indulgent taste." Joyce began, keeping her eyes glued to Jim. "Like the indescribable savor of a cigarette after a month of cold turkey. His blue-eyed glance was enough to turn Pompeii into an inferno without any need of Vesuvius." She continued as Martin shift in his seat while eyeing her carefully with a grin of pride.

"He was a cinematic masterpiece, an indie film full of grain yet such a beautiful piece of art. It was obvious to the naked eye that he bared his cross upon his back like the rest. A flawed man who held his burdens close at heart." Joyce could see Jim smile back at her while she spoke to him. "Many thought of him as fools gold. A speck of glimmering hope that was only tainted by false pretenses. But I saw the truth about that man, the truth that he was more than just a diamond in the rough. He was more than just a flake of pyrite in a sifting search for treasure. He was simply a masterpiece." There it was, her muse, 140 words, and a hand full of similes and metaphors.

Jim stood out of his seat, clapping proudly with the biggest smile Joyce had ever seen. Even when the rest of the students stood up to clap, her eyes could only see him standing there. Suddenly, Martin's booming voice interrupted her thoughts.

"Brilliant! Just brilliant! You've found your muse! Was it the Metropolitan Show? It was, wasn't it? Who cares! Joyce, that was your best piece yet!" Martin shouted proudly as he practically bounced off the walls.

"That was amazing, Joyce. You blew me away tonight." Jim said as he came up to her after the class. Her heart was already beating wildly at the sound of his voice. His smile certainly didn't help the tachycardia that was plaguing her chest.

"Thanks. Honestly, I thought it was going to fail miserably." Joyce said with a short laugh as she buried herself in her cup of coffee.

"You're selling yourself short. That was a pretty stunning performance." Jim could see Joyce's cheeks redden as he complimented her. He could always see the light in her eyes, even when she didn't believe in herself; it was one of several reasons he liked her.

"The truth is, none of that was written down. I just kinda... *went with it.*" Joyce said with a nervous chuckle, but Jim knew it. He could see that none of it was memorized. He could also see her trying to count how many words she was up to on her fingers.

When they finished talking, Joyce was about to walk away, Jim stopped her gently. "Hey... do you wanna get a dinner sometime?" Jim asked nervously.

Joyce smiled. "I'd really like that."

Author's Note:

DUFFFAAAHHH BROTHAAAAASSSS OWNNNNNN
THESEEEEE CHARACTERRRRRSSS

sorry if the last few sentences sucked, something happened and I lost my train of thought when I went back to writing.